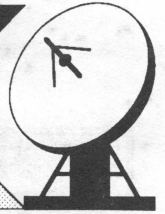


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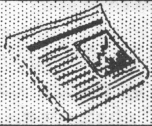
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VOL. 4, NO. 50

DEC. 16-22



THIS
WEEK'S
HEADLINES

AWF Losses May Total \$60,000

ASBURY PARK NJ----With ticket sales languishing and talent costs exorbitant, some insiders estimate losses for the debut weekend for the new American Wrestling Federation could total \$60,000.

Nineteen-year-old Gordon Scozzari, who is backing the AWF through an inheritance, was billing at least a dozen former NWA and WWF stars for the Asbury Park Convention Hall premiere. A scheduled TV taping Sunday at Rutgers University had to be moved to Monday night in Lowell MA.

One New York-based journalist told MATWATCH last week, "Gordon is one of the nicest young guys around but he simply overestimated the ability to promote this." One of the competitors on the show indicated Scozzari had overpaid talent.

Insiders told us Scozzari paid a production crew an estimated \$30,000 in advance to tape the Monday card with no outlets scheduled to air the show.

MATWATCH could not reach Scozzari last week but will attempt to get his assessment in next week's double issue.

China Club Dispute Spreads to PWS

NEW YORK----A recent exchange between Ric Flair and the Nasty Boys at the China Club has been the focus of a discussion on John Arezzi's *PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT*.

On a PWS featuring Jim Cornette as guest, Barry Ross of Hulk Hogan Vitamins called to suggest Flair was the instigator of the incident. Cornette said on-air he had been given information indicating Brian Knobbs and Jerry Saggs started the flap.

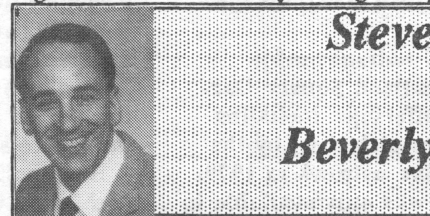
Arezzi told MATWATCH: "I've heard so many sides to this story and so many versions, it's impossible to know which side is true and which side isn't."

Inside Edition Interviews

DOES SUPERSTAR GRAHAM FIRE SMOKING GUN?

Say what you will but Superstar Billy Graham is persistent. Since going public about his degenerative bone disease in early 1990 on KNBC in Los Angeles, the former WWF champion has been considered a potentially lethal smoking gun for the World Wrestling Federation's alleged connection to illegal steroids.

Last Monday, Graham at least fired a shot. He was interviewed for an estimated three hours by producers of the syndicated tabloid newsmagazine *INSIDE EDITION*. The interview is slated to air in January, though MATWATCH has been told King World Productions could opt to move the segment to the February rating sweeps, if eventually deemed heavy enough.



Steve

Beverly

But reports on at least two New York radio outlets over the weekend indicated TitanSports either had already filed or was threatening legal action against *INSIDE EDITION* and King World in an effort to stop the airing of the Graham segment.

MATWATCH was not able to obtain a comment from Titan before deadline.

Sally Braxton is producing the segment for *IE*. While specifics of the were not available, Graham was reportedly prepared to directly link himself to injecting other WWF competitors during his TitanSports tenure.

In a related measure, Graham has been booked for the fourth time on Roy Firestone's *UP CLOSE* interview series on ESPN in January, which could have a bearing on the air date of *IE*. Three times previously, a Graham date was bumped on the advice of attorneys representing the 48-year-old Californian. MATWATCH has also been told by sources at ABC that the highly-rated *20/20* is also investigating the wrestling/steroid link.

Ironically, on a couple of the radio talkfests I guested on last weekend, I was quizzed whether the Graham revelations will spell the ultimate doom of the WWF. My answer is no. Why?

Simply, the track record of similar scandals in mainline professional sports. Dave Meltzer and I have both documented the extensive spotlight on past allegations of steroid abuse in the college football programs at the University of Nebraska and at South Carolina, neither of which are poor sisters in their domain. *SPORTS ILLUSTRATED* has published extensive stories on athletes who have experienced health deterioration from steroids: It hasn't resulted in a notable decline in ticket sales for either the Cornhuskers or the Gamecocks, both football-rabid schools.

(Continued on Page 6)

50 Years of Mat TV, Part VII

TUESDAY NIGHT, TV & TITANS

The television season 1983-84 was a microcosm of America's fascination with conservatism. The situation comedy was declared dead (until Bill Cosby's revival in September 1984) when none finished in the Nielsen top ten. *CHIEFS*, the character study of three generations of police chiefs in a small Southern town, was the top-rated miniseries.

Television sports underwent a metamorphosis. The Los Angeles Raiders shocked the Washington Redskins to win the Super Bowl. The Chicago Cubs, perennial doormats, won baseball's National League East. Ben Crenshaw captured the Masters after years of futility. Howard Cosell walked out after 15 years as an institution on *MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL*.

The genre of wrestling appeared restless. Attendance, as the year began, was down in U.S. arenas. Ric Flair was about to begin his second reign as NWA world champion but was not regularly featured on WTBS' *WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING*, the most widely-watched mat series in America. Bob Backlund's sixth year as WWF world champion was about to come crashing to as career-crushing a halt as any in ring history.

Vince McMahon Jr. was only his father's lead announcer when the World Wrestling Federation first went on national cable. His dream of nationalizing wrestling's fandom was still four years away, though the WTBS-based Georgia group was taking small steps toward expansion, moving into Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Texas and New Mexico with regular spot shows with less-than-spectacular results.

The WWF first emerged on limited national cable through its live broadcasts on the Madison Square Garden Network. A scattering of MSG offerings, including the Garden's monthly mat cards, were picked up by the United Artists-Columbia Pictures cable network in 1979. Soon to become USA Cable, the web was only available in seven million homes by 1980 and was two years away from national measurement by Nielsen.

When USA first topped ten million homes, its prime time offerings were a horrendous mishmash. Two hours a week of nighttime documentaries from England, a sports talk show with Larry Merchant, a heavy load of tape-delayed college football, three hours a week of Black Entertainment Television (before BET spun into a network of its own) and a few old movies which seemed to be repeated every two weeks. And WWF wrestling. The show which was gaining the most audience attention.

By the spring of 1982, USA carried a full daytime schedule and slowly began to branch into more popular prime time offerings (its 1983 purchases of *DRAGNET* and *THE ALFRED HITCHCOCK HOUR* were its first mainstream off-network shows). But that monthly three-hour live wrestling show was USA's top-rated program.

When the younger McMahon bought the WWF, shortly before his father's death in 1983, he already had his battle plan in order. And the symbiotic relationship between the WWF and USA would serve to put both entities on the television map.

Throughout 1983, USA had carried a Texas-produced program, *SOUTHWEST CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING*, which masqueraded as a "national" show by recognizing (on USA) Bruiser Bob Sweetan as "world" champion. In the fall of that year, the title was changed to *ALL-AMERICAN WRESTLING* in a Sunday morning time slot.

USA chief executive officer Kay Koplovitz wanted more polish for the wrestling hour. So, as part of a three-year deal, McMahon took over as host of *ALL-AM*, ostensibly to present highlight clips of matches from various promotions across the nation, WWF, NWA, AWA, the works. That lasted all of seven weeks.

By late December 1983, McMahon converted the series into an exclusive WWF showcase, kicked off by the Iron Sheik's win over Backlund for the federation's belt and—two weeks later, Hulk Hogan's title victory. At the time, it was the first mat series of its kind to employ a control center "week in review" magazine format.

McMahon would eventually phase out live MSG cards for of a weekly two-hour prime-time series, combining elements of a studio show with arena bouts. Borrowing from a scheme not unlike CBS' *NFL TODAY*, *PRIME TIME WRESTLING* featured matches taped at large coliseums, mostly from Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto. Originally hosted by Jack Reynolds and Jesse Ventura, the show focused on the banter of the anchors and pushed Ventura into cable stardom. PTW instantly hit cable's top ten.

But April 1984 touched off the first serious indication McMahon would produce TV wrestling with a wink, rather than a stalwart of athletic integrity. *TUESDAY NIGHT TITANS* (aka *TNT*, after moving to two different nights) featured McMahon in a *TONIGHT SHOW*-like desk-and-sofa set with Lord Alfred Hayes as his Ed McMahon, a live band and audience and wrestlers parodying themselves as talk-show guests. Mat clips were incidental to the banter. Part *GONG SHOW*, part horrendous sketch comedy, *TNT* featured anything from David Shultz body-slammng Butcher Vachon during his "wedding" to Diane Page to Jimmy Hart singing, "Roll Over, Beethoven."

TNT quickly rose to the runner-up slot in the ratings on cable TV, just below *WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING*, but fell just as quickly and was canceled after its second season, with Gene Okerlund riding out the last eight weeks as host (one week singing "Tutti Frutti" as a lead-off). Still, it drew the attention of Los Angeles TV critic Howard Rosenberg: "Some fans say their biggest thrill in sports was watching Henry Aaron break Babe Ruth's career record...mine was watching 400-pound Kamala, the Ugandan Giant, devour a live chicken. It happened on *TNT*."

(Next week: *Black Saturday*).

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IDIOTS
Dec. 9-15

(LUCHA LIBRE) - [12/6]: Black Magic/Love Machine (Art Barr)/Mogur d. Hussein el Gran Sheik/Javier Cruz/Gargola el Sultan 2-3 falls; Los Mosqueteros del Diablo/Los Brazos d. El Hijo del Santo/El Dandy/Ringo Mendoza 2-3; (SEG) El Satanico challenges El Dandy to caballera contra caballera match; El Espectro Jr./El Supremo I/El Espectro d. Ultratumba d. Las Saetas del Ring 2-3. **DRAW.** [12/8]: *M.S. I/Herodes/Pirata Morgan d. Konnan d. Barbaro/Ringo Mendoza/Octagon 2-3; (NWA WORLD WELTERWEIGHT TITLE) El Misterioso d. Fuerza Guerrera 2-3 to win belt; Los Hermanos Dinamita d. Atlantis/Animal/El Rayo de Jalisco 2-3; (CABALLERA CONTRA CABALLERA) El Satanico d. El Dandy 2-3. POWERSLAM.*

(SUNCOAST PRO) - [OPEN] Penelope Paradise imports Rico Frederico into Penelope's Playhouse after Rico helps Superstar win Southern title; (SOUTHERN TITLE) Dean Malenko d. Superstar by countout when Penelope rings bell early. S'tar keeps belt; Tommy Starr vs. Jim Cooper in progress as show ends. **NO RATING.**

(GLOBAL/ESPN) - [Mon.]: Barry Horowitz d. Terry Daniels for first TV win; (REPLAY) Tug Taylor d. Mike Davis by DQ when Tom Davis pushes Tug off top rope. Terry Garvin saves; Davis Bros. d. Ben Jordan/Rick Garren; (NEWSROOM) Joe Pedicino says Marcos Villas will clear up Max Andrews situation next week & looks at Steve Dane in Korea; (REPLAY/GLOBAL TV TITLE) Eddie Gilbert d. Garvin to retain belt holding trunks; Bull Pain d. Sam Houston when Chris Love holds Bull's leg to make Sam miss bulldog. **DRAW.**

[Tue.]: {REPLAY} Taylor saves Chaz from attack by Davis Bros./Lightning Kid; Chaz d. Tom Davis by DQ when Mike Davis runs in; Chaz d. Gary Scott; (NO DQ) Black Bart d. Pain by DQ when Samantha runs in; (NEWSROOM) Joe Pedicino on prospect of Baby Doll coming to help Houston vs. Pain/Samantha, Dane in Korea; (REPLAY) Horowitz d. Daniels to become "The Winner;" (GWF TAG TITLE) John Tatum/Rod Price d. Steve Simpson (who solos) to win belts when Price decks Steve w. glove as Skandor Akbar distracts ref. **DRAW.**

[Wed.]: Not available.

[Thu.]: Davises d. Taylor/Garvin when Chaz creams Davises outside ring w. chair after Mike Davis tries to bash Chaz; Houston d. Buster Blackheart; (GLOBAL TAG TITLE) Tatum/Price d. Simpson (who solos) to win belts when Price decks Simpson w. glove as Akbar distracts ref; Gary Young d. Body smasher; Bart d. Pain by DQ when Samantha runs in; (NO DQ) Taylor/Garvin no contest vs. Davises; Garvin demands cage match next week as show ends. **NO RATING.**

(GLOBAL/SYN) - [MAJOR LEAGUE]: {GWF TAG TITLE} Tatum/Price d. Simpson to win belts; Pain d. Houston when Samantha runs in; (WINNING MOMENT) Horowitz d. Daniels to become "The Winner;" Lightning Kid d. Brian Costello; (NEWSROOM) Pedicino on Samantha & Baby Doll, Chris Love's return w. Badd Co., Steven DeTruth; Bill Irwin d. Sweet Daddy Falcone; (REPLAY) Taylor-Garvin vs. Davises saga; (NORTH AMERICAN TITLE) Patriot d. Scott Anthony by DQ to retain belt when Scotty bring in chain. **DRAW.**

(WCW/TBS) - [POWER HOUR]: Van Hammer d. Thomas Rich; Johnny B. Badd d. Jim Boss. After, Teddy Long says he'll break J.B.B.; (HANDICAP) Curtis Hughes d. Ian Weston/Terry Bronson; (CLASH/WCW WORLD TAG TITLE) Ricky Steamboat/Dustin Rhodes d. Arn Anderson/Larry Zbyszko to win belts; (WWW) Anderson/Bobby Eaton d. Freebirds when Larry Zbyszko clotheslines Michael Hayes when ref distracted.

Barry Windham tries to save but entree Dangerous Alliance jumps him until Steamboat/Rhodes chase heels; (MISSY DOES MAIL) Sting

one-on-one interview w. Jim Ross; Steve Austin/Bobby Eaton d. Brian Pillman/Tom Zenk. **DRAW.**

[WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP]: Marcus Alexander Bagwell d. Rip Rogers; Cactus Jack d. Pez Whatley; (WCW MAGAZINE) Eric Bischoff w. Pillman d. Richard Morton, Jushin Liger d. Chris Benoit; (REPLAY/U.S. TAG TITLE) Young Pistols d. Patriots to win belts; (ELIMINATION TAG MATCH) Patriots vs. Pistols: 1) Steve Armstrong d. Curtis Thompson despite being illegal man. 2) Todd Champion d. Armstrong. 3) Champion d. Smothers w. rollup after Tracy accidentally decks Steve; Hammer d. Pat Rose; (WCW TV TITLE) Austin d. Arachnabrad when Madusa kicks Brad off top rope; Rich/Sgt. Buddy Lee Parker d. Big Josh/Mike Graham when Rich dobbers Mike w. computer & pins him as illegal man; Steamboat d. Eaton but Madusa kicks Ricky after & Austin/Eaton doubleteam until Windham saves. **DRAW-PLUS.** [MAIN EVENT]: {SUBMIT OR SURRENDER} Hughes d. P.N. News when Harley Race decks Steve Armstrong, who had come to ringside, grabs towel & tosses it in; (WCW MAGAZINE) Bischoff replays Steamboat-Eaton WCW match; Cactus d. Scott Sandlin; (ROSS REPORT) Pistols; Hammer d. Sawyer; (U.S. TAG TITLE) Pistols d. Patriots to retain belts. **RESTHOLD-PLUS.**

(WCW/SYN) - [WCW PRO]: Steamboat/Rhodes d. Pat Rose/The Medic; Zenk d. Cactus when Hammer trips Cactus & holds his leg. Van/Cactus brawl down aisle; Rick Rude d. Larry Santo; (WNN) Gordon Solle w. Liger clips, LETHAL LOTTERY rules; Big Van Vader d. Larry Corey; (SEG) Bagwell says he'll make it in WCW; Eaton/Anderson d. Freebirds when Zbyszko clotheslines Hayes while ref distracted. Windham tries to save but is attacked by Alliance until Steamboat/Rhodes chase heels. **DRAW.**

[WORLD WIDE]: Rick Steiner d. Sonny Trout; Badd d. Boss. After, Long says he'll break J.B.B.; (6-MAN) Anderson/Eaton/Austin d. Josh/P.N.N./Arachnabrad; (WNN) Liger clips; Rhodes/Steamboat d. Sawyer/Parker; Sting d. Hughes. **DRAW-PLUS.**

(WWF/USA) - [PRIME TIME]: {OPEN} Jack Tunney declares WWF title vacant & says Royal Rumble winner will be champion; Mountie d. Jim Neidhart by holding tights; Repo Man d. Mark Boswell; (UPDATE) Gene Okerlund w. Undertaker on Royal Rumble; Nasty Boys d. Paul Perez/Mario Mancini; Sgt. Slaughter/Jim Duggan d. Dwayne Gill/Barry Hardy; I.R. Schyster d. Sonny Blaze; Big Bossman d. Warlord by DQ when Bruno runs in. Warlord tries to ambush Bubba, who grabs nightstick & creams Warlord twice in gut. Bruno flees; Legion of Doom d. Executioners; (I-C TITLE) Bret Hart d. Barbarian to retain belt; Ted DiBiase d. Greg Valentine holding trunks; Virgil d. Von Krus; Jake Roberts d. Chris Duffy. **RESTHOLD-PLUS.**

(WWF/SYN) - [CHALLENGE]: Hart d. Kato; (SPECIAL REPORT) Hogan on Royal Rumble situation; Undertaker d. Mark Thomas; L.O.D. d. Bob Wisseman/Nick Taranton; I.R.S. d. Lumpy Rutherford; (ROYAL RUMBLE REPORT); DiBiase d. Dale Wolf. **RESTHOLD.**

[SUPERSTARS]: Bushwhackers d. Brian Donahue/Hardy; (UPDATE) Roberts DDTs Randy Savage in front of Liz, then slaps Liz across ring; Roberts d. Ross Greenberg; Virgil d. Krus; Natural Disasters d. Bill Pierce/Kevin Drake; (SEG) Freddie Blassie presents Hart "Wrestler of the Year" trophy; Tito Santana d. Duffy; Beverly Bros. d. Blaze/Jim Arnese; (ANGLE) Beverlys yank

SCALE: PINEALL - Must See. PILEDRIVER - Excellent. POWERSLAM - Good. DRAW - Average. RESTHOLD - Fair. BOMB - Poor. PLUS - Midscale.

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Jamleson out of crowd by lapels. Whackers save. RESTHOLD.

(LPWA) - [HANDICAP] Denise Storm d. Brandy Wine/Debbie Wild; Black Venus d. Allison Royal; (CORNETTE'S CORNER) Susan Green chokes Jim by tie when he insults her work as prison officer; (6-WOMAN/JAPAN) Terri Power/Reggie Bennett/Masumi Ozaka d. Devil Masami/Miki Handa/Plum Mariko; (MIXED) Lisa Starr/Barry Horowitz d. Tim Horner/Malaya Hosaka when Barry decks Malaya. RESTHOLD.

(NEW PWTW) - [GA/1990] Dirty White Boy/Festus d. Billy Black/Mr. Wrestling; (GLOBAL) Pain d. Daniels; (NWA CLASSIC) Midnight Express d. Samoan Swat Team; (LPWA) Power d. Bad Girl; (INTL/CALGARY) Makhan Singh d. Don Muraco; (GLOBAL) Renegade Warriors d. Tony George/Buster Blackheart. RESTHOLD.

(IWCCW) - Joe Savoldi d. Zap; Star Warrior d. Ga. Guerrilla I; (CLASSIC) Bob Backlund d. Johnny Rodz; Madison Bros. d. Billion \$ Babies; Tony Atlas d. Boss Hogg Cowhoon. BOMB.

(USWA/WMC) - [REPLAY] Bart Sawyer-Doug Masters split; Sawyer d. Moondog Spot by DQ when Masters runs in & heels double on Bart; (MID-SOUTH COL/USWA TITLE) Kimala d. Jerry Lawler to regain held up belt when Sandman runs in during ref bump & rams Lawler into surfboard; Tony Anthony d. Sandman by DQ when Sandman rams ref Paul Heyman Sr. (Neighbors) into surfboard. Lawler saves by bashing Sandy w. chair & beats him back to curtain; (MSC/SOUTHERN TITLE) Eric Embry d. Tom Prichard to regain belt when Eric's valet C.J. runs in & Embry ambushes Tom w. her purse; (ANGLE) Before skedded Embry-Jeff Jarrett title match, Miss Texas flies into studio on to C.J. & pounds on her until Embry decks Miss TX. Prichard saves & demands return bout w. Embry. Eddie Marlin agrees; (MSC/USWA TAG TITLE) Jarrett/Robert Fuller d. Moondogs by DQ but Fuller "injured" when Moondogs repeatedly drop on throat w. bones. Moondogs keep belts; (STUDIO/SOUTHERN TITLE) Jarrett d. Embry by DQ when Moondogs run in but Awesome Kong saves; (ANGLE) Marlin cancels Prichard-Tony Falk match to resume Jarrett-Embry bout but C.J. ambushes Miss TX & brawl erupts. Embry decks Miss TX & opens her up. Anthony finally saves; (SOUTHERN TITLE II) Jarrett vs. Embry in progress as show ends. DRAW-PLUS.

LINES OF THE WEEK

1. Arn Anderson, PH, on fans doing tomahawk chop: "This ain't baseball! This is rasslin." 2. Scott Hudson/Craig Johnson, ESPN, on Hell's Kitchen: (SH) "Have you ordered anything from there?" (CJ) "I haven't had any desire to." 3. Jerry

Lawler, WMC, on Sandman: "The only Sandman I've ever heard of is a guy that puts people to sleep and Monday night, you're gonna think I'm the Sandman." 4. Teddy Long, PH, to Johnny B. Badd: "Just like I took you to the top, I'm gonna take you to the bottom." 5. Barry Horowitz, MLW, on winning: "My life has changed. I have winning hair. Winning body." 6. Horowitz, MLW: "Most of all, I want to thank all the losers. Because without them, there wouldn't be The Winner." 7. Jim Ross, PH, on Brian Pillman: "This has certainly been a better year for him than it's been for the (Cincinnati) Bengals." 8. Ross, PH: "If there's one thing Paul E. is sensitive about, it's people having their hair pulled. Obviously, he cannot afford to have that happen to him." 9. Bobby Heenan, PTW: "You've heard of the long arm of the law? The Bossman has the long

hand of the law. He can take more bribes...." 10. Heenan/Alfred Hayes, PTW: (AH) "When do you ever tell the truth?" (BH) "You're a good-lookin' guy. Lied again...ha, ha ha!"

11. Ross, WCW, on Steamboat-Eaton: "Talk about taking it to the streets...they're taking it to the seats." 12. Ricky Steamboat/Ross/Madusa Micell, WCW: (RS, in ring, to Madusa): "Shut up, witch!" (JR) "He said 'witch.' That may not be what it sounded like but he said it." (MM) "Well, kiss my grits." 13. Eddie Gilbert, GWF, to Johnson: "The rumor I hear lately is that you're the son of Joe Pedicino and Boni Blackstone. In fact, my good friend Jon Horton confirmed that fact." 14. Gilbert, GWF: "Welcome to the GWF--the Gilbert Wrestling Federation." 15. Gorilla Monsoon/Heenan, WC: (GM) "You haven't spent a dime in 20 years. It's always me, me, me!" (BH) "You sound like an opera singer warming up--ME, ME, MEEEEEE!" 16. Jim Cornette, LPWA: "With these headsets on, I fell like Ray Walston on MY FAVORITE MARTIAN." 17. Cornette, LPWA: "Eddie Sharkey has a Doctor of Dental Medicine degree. Everything he's ever done to people has been like pulling teeth."

STRONGEST COMMENTS - 1. Heenan, PTW: "A woman's worse than a snake." 2. Scott Anthony, MLW, on The Cartel: "I didn't care nothing about those other guys, no way. They were just jokers."

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK - 1. Paul E. Dangerously, PH, on Eric Bischoff: "This is the reporter you people give me?" 2. Jim Ross, PH: "Why would anyone want to talk to Cactus Jack?"

NICKNAMES OF THE WEEK - 1. MR. NO-NAME (Lawler on Sandman). 2. THE NOSE JOB (Curt Hennig on Beverly Bros. finishing move). 3. MEAN MOTOR SCOOTER (Cornette on Denise Storm).

BEST PICTURES - 1. WCW PRO, Fans doing tomahawk chop during Freebirds-Anderson/Eaton. 2. PRO, Zenk cross body block over top on Cactus. 3. PRO, Arn's rage at the chop. 4. WMC, Paul Heyman Sr. pounding Kimala outside ring. 5. PRO, Paul E. mocking Bischoff behind his back. 6. PH, Paul E. telling Eaton Austin "says he's sorry" about accidentally hitting him. 7. PTW, Bossman putting on Bruno Wimpleman's cap. 8. WCW, Steamboat-Eaton taking match into seats. 9. WCW, Madusa stomping on Steamboat's jacket. 10. WCW, Madusa kicking Steamboat and falling on her hindside when Ricky appears to be ready to chop her. 11. LPWA, Susan Green grabbing Jim Cornette by tie when he insults her.

SOLIEISM OF THE WEEK - Ross, WCW: "If your opponent can get to some sort of VERTICALITY."

ENGLISH LESSONS - 1. Doug Masters, WMC: "Bart Sawyer, you say I haven't WONNED any matches." 2. Horowitz, MLW: "I have WENT out and bought a new car."

ALL-CLICHE TEAM - 1. Masters, WMC: "...what goes around, comes around." 2. Vince McMahon, SOW: "...what goes around, comes around." 3. Joe Pedicino, LPWA: "...fight fire with fire."

BLOOPER AWARD - WMC, for graphics billing Monday's Mid-South Colliseum card for "Monday, Nov. 4."

BOO AWARDS - 1. Eric Embry, WMC, for decking Miss Texas twice and opening her up the second time. There may be a few folks who still find this entertaining but, if you ask me, it's sicker as time goes on. 2. WWF, for replaying Jake hitting Liz. That's enough family entertainment, guys.

In Tokyo Dome

HOGAN: NO FAVOR FOR TENRYU

TOKYO----Japanese media members were nearly stuck with DEWEY DEFEATS TRUMAN-style headlines after Thursday night's Hulk Hogan-Genichiro Tenryu main event in the Tokyo Dome.

Hogan arrived late for the card and, seeing that the finale would likely end after most early deadlines, promoters told reporters the planned finish, a Tenryu victory.

However, according to insiders, Hogan balked at doing the job, despite a reported pre-show agreement between Titan Sports and Japan's Super World Sports. Correspondents, most of whom had already faxed their stories, had to scramble to change the lead lines of their stories when they saw Hogan scoring the pinfall on their television monitors.

Most observers do not feel the change will alter the relationship between Titan and SWS.

THE TOKYO CROWD: An estimated 45,000 were in the Dome (despite an announced 61,000). But no estimates on the paid, though many freebies were in the 45,000.

INQUIRING MEDIA: Score another one for Titan. *ADWEEK*, a major industry trade publication, is reporting the WWF will draw 22 million at the gate this year in 600 live events (though the actual arena count is a shade under 500 shows). Check your math. For that to be true, the WWF would have to draw 37,000-a-show. Dream along with me....

STAYING HOME: The Randy Savage-Jake Roberts series is dying all over, indicating the hardcore snake and slap Liz angles have failed. Saturday, the Randy-Jake topliner drew the worst crowd in Boston in at least seven years.

ON THE AIR: I was on four radio shows over the weekend and the Roberts-Liz angle drew attention on *THE WRESTLING INSIDERS* with Mike Tenay and Rob Stowell (KVEG, Las Vegas, syndicated to Sports & Entertainment Network affiliates) Saturday night. Several callers said they were turned off by the angle. One said he had taken his kids for years to the WWF but will not to see this match, adding McMahon has gone too far.

THE INSIDERS: By the way, the *INSIDERS* begin their sixth week Saturday. The national call-in line (Saturdays from 9-10 p.m. EST) is 1-800-258-5834. Good show.

SATURDAY ON WCW: The Young Pistols take on the Patriots in a 2-out-of-3 fall match where the losers have to leave TBS for 60 days.

ALSO SATURDAY: A Mike Graham-Thomas Rich match will be followed by a Steve Austin-Ricky Steamboat TV title match, in which Barry Windham will become involved.

THE ENGLISH TOUR: While no crowds were record-setters, we're told the WCW United Kingdom tour built momentum as the week went along. Most of the guys were expected to fly in Sunday at 5:30.

PREMIERING IN JANUARY: John Arezzi and Rich

Mancuso launch their new wrestle/talk TV show Jan. 4 on WNYX in New York. The show will also air on Ch. 54 in the Brooklyn/Brownsville area, Ch. 38 in Manhattan, the Bronx, western New Jersey and Westchester County and Ch. 44 in Nassau County and Queens.

QUICKER SCHEDULE: WCW's announcers who live outside Atlanta have been told they'll have to fly in weekly beginning in January. Jim Crockett wants references more current than at times this year when shows were taped as many as five weeks in advance.

LETHAL LOTTERY LINEUP: In case you wondered, no outsiders, other than Jushin Liger, will be in the STARRCADE lineup. Ironically and puzzling, Brian Pillman will not be on the January Tokyo Dome show to meet Liger.

TAINT TRUE, FOLKS: On every show I was on last weekend, people clamored to know when The Ultimate Warrior was coming to WCW. Fact is, he is not signed (unless something has changed) and I don't expect it. Too expensive.

GLOBAL GOBS: Friday night, a 22-minute Eddie Gilbert-Terry Garvin match was taped which I'm told was top-notch. Also, a Chaz-Tug Taylor elimination match vs. the Davis Bros. And, a Sam Houston-Bull Pain rematch ended with both Baby Doll (Nicola Smith) and Samantha going to it.

NO LOVE: Bruce Prichard begins as Craig Johnson's new color commentator for Global's MAJOR LEAGUE in January. He will simply be Bruce Prichard, babyface, and will not talk or attempt to look like Brother Love.

DON'T DO IT TO FARGO: Freddie Fargo was told he may be dropped as a columnist for WCW MAGAZINE if he does another GWF MAIN EVENTS show. Why?

MONDAY IN MEMPHIS: Awesome Kong & Jeff Jarrett tried to wrest the USWA tag titles from the Moondogs. Others on the bill: Jerry Lawler vs. Sandman; Koko B. Ware vs. Spirit of America (Randy Lewis); Eric Embry vs. Tom Prichard (Southern title); Candyman vs. The Shadow; Tony Anthony vs. Tony Falk; and Doug Masters vs. Bart Sawyer.

THE UGANDAN CHAMP: Kimala regained the held up USWA title for a second time Dec. 9 when Sandman ran in during a ref bump and smashed Lawler into a surfboard. Yet, Kimala wasn't on Monday's card.

A BIG SHEW: Lawler appeared this week at Beale Street in Memphis with his group, the Nunnery Bros. and legendary B.B. King. The show was billed as "The King & B.B. King."

EARLY AWF RETURNS: Jim Cornette and Eddie Gilbert both stayed home from the Asbury Park NJ show Saturday. Cornette did not receive a plane ticket and Gilbert, who was to have a prepaid ticket to leave from Dallas, was not sent one. He was going to Monday's AWF taping if a ticket came.

THE TOPLINER: A Paul Orndorff-Al Perez match ended up the main event. Nikita Koloff, who was paid and came, called earlier to say he couldn't work because of an ailing back. Fans who went said a tag match featuring Hercules Ayala and TNT from Puerto Rico as a team was strong.

ICWA UPDATE: The Terminators are the new ICWA U.S. tag champs, defeating the Star Riders. They'll defend vs. Johnny Ace/Al Perez Dec. 29 in Tampa. Dick Slater and Jumbo Baretta meet to decide the ICWA Fla. champ.

MATWATCH

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11 Wins in 13 Weeks

RATINGS RAP

WCW AGAIN BREAKS THE THREE BARRIER

Time was, in late summer, when one wondered if WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING was in danger of dropping below a 2 rating. The turnaround continues.

For the second straight week, WCW's Saturday show has posted a 3.3 rating to capture the Nielsen cable ratings race for the 11th time in 13 weeks.

WCW drew a 6.5 per cent share of audience in a week which was the highest-rated, average-wise, for the five regular cable shows, in ten months. All five TBS and USA programs averaged a 2.7.

Nailing down the runner-up slot for the second week in a row was WWF ALL-AMERICAN, drawing a 3.0/7.6, strong but down slightly from the 3.2 of the week before.

PRIME TIME WRESTLING finally emerged from its doldrums of fall to capture third place with a 2.7/3.9, up from its 2.3 average of the fourth quarter.

WCW MAIN EVENT stayed on its average of the last five weeks with a 2.4/4.1, falling to fourth.

For the fourth time in seven weeks, WCW's POWER HOUR tallied a 2.0, posting the week's top share, a 7.7.

CABLE

Week Ending Dec. 9	Rating/Share	Total Homes	Year Ago
WCW World Champ. (TBS 12/7)	3.3/6.5	1.9 million	2.9/6.1
WWF All-American (USA 12/8)	3.0/7.6	1.73 million	2.5/6.4
WWF Prime Time (USA 12/9)	2.7/3.9	1.56 million	2.7/4.1
WCW Main Event (TBS 12/8)	2.4/4.1	1.38 million	3.1/5.6
WCW Power Hour (TBS 12/7)	2.0/7.7	1.15 million	1.6/6.0

STEVE BEVERLY

(Continued from Page 1)

I related to Pete Warnick on *BAU MAIN EVENT* Saturday of the week after the George Zahorian trial, which was covered nationwide by the Associated Press and some of the country's top newspapers. John Arezzi, in my view the best journalist of any wrestling talk host, was trying to keep his *PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT* focused on the trial. Know what two thirds of the callers asked? "Eh, John? Have you heard what the matches are gonna be for *SUMMER SLAM*?"

It's all relative to what the audience wants. If Graham's story eventually airs on *IE*, it will get attention because it will be in front of the widest audience he has yet had. But some people will still be oblivious. In my book, *A HISTORY OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING AS TELEVISION PROGRAM FORM: 1941-1989*, I cited a Gallup poll taken after the late '50s TV quiz show scandals in which many big-money games were discovered to be rigged. Six months after the scandals broke, Gallup found 46 per cent of American television viewers angry because the shows were canceled and willing to again watch them. More than six months after Lyle Alzado's admission of health problems stemming from use of Human Growth Hormone, has the NFL suffered? How many people even talk now about Alzado?

I agree with those who believe Graham's story and other developments will again shine an ugly light on the wrestling/

steroids connection, perhaps the brightest yet. But a lot more huffing and puffing than Billy Graham's accusations, valid and serious though they are, will be necessary to blow down the house Vince McMahon built.

1991 Annual MATWATCH: THE FINAL CHAPTER

As Ricky Ricardo said the night Lucy had Little Ricky, "The time has come!" So it has for us as we lay our four-year-old publication to rest with **MATWATCH: THE FINAL CHAPTER**, scheduled for mailing Feb. 28.

We will be offering a number of our regular year-end features, including the naming of our fourth **MATWATCH** Man of the Year, the top 15 TV news stories of 1991 and the annual Wrestling Broadcasting System lineup of shows.

But for two-thirds of **THE FINAL CHAPTER**, we'll dip back into our storehouse of memories for a look back at vignettes and personal moments over the four years of a newsletter which started as a friendly exchange among seven friends.

PRICE: \$13 (U.S./CANADA), \$21 (OVERSEAS).

Send check, cash or money order to: **MATWATCH, 16 ROBIN HOOD LANE, JACKSON TN 38305.**

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If your mailing label says **FINAL ISSUE**, the cost to subscribe through the closing issue of **MATWATCH** (Jan. 27) is \$7.50 (U.S./Canada), \$12 (Overseas).

For succeeding closeout rates, check below:

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You still have this week to order a special Christmas gift of our final six issues of **MATWATCH** for someone other than at your address. The gift pack begins next week for \$5 for the six. Check, cash or money order to: **MATWATCH, 16 ROBIN HOOD LANE, JACKSON TN 38305.**

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